

Complaints and Grievances Procedure

1. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the process by which complaints and grievances will be handled at Eastside Lutheran College.

2. Scope

This policy applies primarily to staff, students, parents/carers, and members of Eastside Lutheran College community, and may be used either in relation to grievances raised by groups or by individuals in relation to:

- bullying
- discrimination
- harassment
- unfair treatment
- victimisation

Circumstances do exist in which this policy does not apply, including:

- in relation to issues which are outside of the responsibility or scope of Eastside Lutheran College in its role as an employer
- where an existing review, appeal or complaint procedure is already in process.

3. Definitions

Definitions for this procedure are defined in the Complaints and Grievances Policy. Please refer to that document for further information.

4. Responsibilities

Principal	Ultimately responsible for dealing with grievances and complaints made in respect to most College matters; may delegate responsibility to College Directors, Managers and Coordinators.
College Director	Deals with most grievances and complaints that escalate to a formal process; may oversee or advise on grievances and complaints at a less formal level upon request or where deemed helpful.
College Coordinator	Deals with lower-level grievances and complaints that are settled by less formal discussion and resolution.

Eastside Lutheran College staff	May receive grievances and/or complaints via informal channels; responsible for redirecting families to the formal process where informal processes fail. Should seek help or advice from their College Coordinators or Director where required, or where escalation to a formal process seems likely.
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5. Supporting/related documents

Anti-Bullying Policy – Staff	Practice and Behaviour Guidelines
Anti-Bullying Policy – Students	Privacy Policy
Anti-Discrimination Policy	Records Management Policy
Complaints and Grievances Policy	Eastside Lutheran College Code of Conduct

6. Procedures

The Complaints and Grievance Procedures for staff, students and Eastside Lutheran College community members are set out in the following documents which form part of this procedure:

Information for staff

- Managing a complaint
- Managing a complaint (flowchart)
- Lodging a complaint (flowchart)

Information for students

- Complaints and grievance flowchart for students

Information for parents/carers/Eastside Lutheran community Members

- Complaints and grievance flowchart for parents/carers/community members

Frequently Asked Questions

7. Record keeping

This policy is reviewed annually, unless there is a significant legislative or organisational change requiring earlier review.

The master copy is kept in Complispace.

Complaints and Grievances Procedure

INFORMATION FOR STAFF

What do I do if I need to make a complaint, or if I have a grievance?

If you have a complaint regarding a situation, service, facilities, policy, procedure or behaviour within the College, please follow the flowchart entitled 'Staff: lodging a complaint'.

What if I receive a complaint from a parent, student or community member?

Any staff member at Eastside Lutheran College may receive a complaint or grievance. If you receive a complaint or grievance, your first step should be to consider the nature of the issue and the possible risks associated with it. If you feel that a complaint or grievance is beyond your ability to resolve, you should seek help from your Lead Teacher or Coordinator. If it is appropriate for you to manage the complaint or grievance, refer to the 'Staff: managing a complaint' flowchart.

Are there complaints and grievances that I should *not* manage myself?

Some complaints and grievances must be referred to specialist staff, or to the Leadership. Should you receive a complaint about any of the following, please speak with your Coordinator.

- allegations of a safeguarding children nature against an employee
- allegations of corruption or misconduct
- a risk of harm or significant harm to a child
- privacy or data breach issues
- issues or complaints relating to Children's Services (Pre-Kindergarten/ Kindergarten/ OSHC), or the National Quality Framework.

The Complaints and Grievance Procedure

The subsequent pages of this document will outline the procedure to be undertaken upon the receipt of a complaint or grievance from a member of Eastside Lutheran College community, including students and their families.

STAFF: MANAGING A COMPLAINT

As a staff member of Eastside Lutheran College, there may be occasions in which you are required to manage a complaint presented to you by a parent, student or community member. Where this is the case, the following procedure applies. At each step in this procedure, it is expected that staff will:

- listen to the complaint
- acknowledge the issues raised
- gather as much information as possible

- communicate your decision, providing reasons
- implement your outcome actions; and either
- close the complaint, or refer to the next step in the process

(STEP 1: The informal process) Most complaints should be resolved at this level, without the need for further escalation. Class teachers, subject teachers and mentors are often in the best position to handle routine concerns about matters relating to their own areas of responsibility. Manage the complaint or grievance at your discretion, being mindful to seek further help (step 2) if required.

(STEP 2) Some complaints may require further support. Where this is the case, your next step is to speak with your Coordinator, who will support you through the resolution process and arrange a meeting between the relevant parties. Record keeping should begin at this point, particularly if the complaint is recurrent.

(STEP 3: The formal process) Should resolution prove impossible at the informal level, a complaint or grievance should now progress to the formal resolution process. This process is initiated at the completion of the Complaints and Grievances Form, which may be completed either by the complainant, or by the staff member in receipt of a complaint submitted via the College Webpage or by alternate means (e.g. email). Completion of the form will escalate the matter to the Director of Student and Staff Welfare and trigger the commencement of formal record keeping. The Director of Student and Staff Welfare should seek to resolve the complaint or grievance according to the same steps outlined above.

(STEP 4: Formal review by the Principal) This is usually the final step in the Complaints and Grievance Procedure. Any decisions made by the Principal are usually final. The Principal will request to meet with both parties to seek a mutually agreed upon resolution. Where agreement cannot be reached, the Principal will collate all the available information and make a determination. Both parties will be informed of the Principal's decision in writing.

(STEP 5: Formal Letter to the Chairperson of the Board) This is the final step in the Complaints and Grievances Procedure. Any decisions made at this level are final. The Board Chair may request a meeting with all parties either separately or together to seek a resolution. The Chair may involve the Director of LEVNT and or legal counsel. All parties will be informed of the decision in writing.

STAFF: MANAGING A COMPLAINT (FLOWCHART)

STAFF: MANAGING A COMPLAINT - PARENT/ COMMUNITY - FLOW CHART				
	CATAGORY	PROCESS	ACTION	RESOLUTION
STEP 1	Informal Complaint	Complaint received from parent / community. Where possible speak informally to the person and seek a timely resolution.	Meet and discuss	Resolved



STEP 2	Informal Complaint	Complaint received from parent / community. Talk to Coordinator or Director. Plan a course of action. Meet with the respondent. Record keeping is mandatory.	Meet and Discuss	Resolved
STEP 3	Formal Complaint	Parent or Community Complainant lodges a formal online Complaints and Grievances form. This form automatically is forwarded to the Director of Student and Staff Welfare, who will act upon the complaint according to the issues and people involved. Record keeping is mandatory.	Meet and Discuss	Resolved
STEP 4	Formal Complaint	Follow on from Step 3 for further resolution. The Principal will meet with all parties and make a decision. This decision will be in writing. Record keeping is mandatory.	Meet and discuss	Resolution Relationship restoration and building.
STEP 5	Further action	Formal letter to the Chairperson of the Board. If a complainant continues to be dissatisfied with the decision or process, they may write a formal letter of complaint to the Chair of the Board and further to that the Director of LEVNT.	Meeting and discuss	Final resolution Relationship restoration and building.

STAFF: LODGING A COMPLAINT (FLOWCHART)

LODGING A COMPLAINT – STAFF - FLOW CHART				
	CATAGORY	PROCESS	ACTION	RESOLUTION
STEP 1	Informal Complaint	<p>Before lodging a formal complaint Where possible speak informally to the person and seek a timely resolution. If your complaint or grievance is regarding a service, facility, policy or procedure, speak with the relevant staff member in charge of this area.</p>	Meet and discuss	Resolved
STEP 2	Informal Complaint	<p>Informal Resolution Talk to your immediate supervisor (Coordinator or Director). Plan a course of action. Meet with the respondent. Record keeping is mandatory.</p>	Meet and Discuss	Resolved
STEP 3	Formal Complaint	<p>Lodgement of a formal online Complaints and Grievances form. Lodge a formal complaint using the online Complispace form. This form automatically is forwarded to the Director of Student and Staff Welfare, who will act upon the complaint according to the issues and people involved. Record keeping is mandatory.</p>	Meet and Discuss	Resolved
STEP 4	Formal Complaint	<p>Follow on from Step 3 for further resolution. The Director of Student and Staff Welfare will forward to complaint or grievance to the Principal explaining the previous actions taken. The Principal will meet with all parties and make a decision. This decision will be in writing. Record keeping is mandatory.</p>	Meet and discuss	Resolution Relationship restoration and building.
STEP 5	Further Action	<p>Formal letter to the Chairperson of the Board. If any party continues to be dissatisfied with the decision or process, they may write a formal letter of complaint to the Chair of the Board who may involve the Director of LEVNT.</p>	Meet and discuss	Final resolution.
<p>NB: At any time in the process (Step 1 – 5) a staff member requires the support of a person of their choosing or the IEU this must be made available to them.</p>				

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

What do I do if I have a complaint or grievance?

If you have a complaint regarding a situation, service, facilities, policy, procedure or behaviour within Eastside Lutheran College, please follow the flowchart enclosed after this information.

What should I expect throughout this process?

The first step of this process requires you to attempt to resolve the complaint or grievance by informal means. Speak with the person involved and try to reach a mutually beneficial outcome. If you cannot resolve the issue at this first step, speak with a staff member, or someone you trust, at Eastside Lutheran College. They will walk you through the rest of the grievance process. You can expect any of our staff to:

1. Listen to your Complaint.
2. Acknowledge the issues you have raised.
3. Gather as much information as possible.
4. Communicate their decision, providing reasons.
5. Implement their outcome actions.
6. Close the complaint or refer to the next step in the process.

If at any point you feel that the staff member assigned to the resolution of your grievance or complaint is not an appropriate person, you have the right to request that another staff member manage the process.

What is expected of me throughout this process?

Eastside Lutheran College expects that you will continue to maintain your enrolment and attendance throughout the complaints and appeals process.

FLOWCHART FOR STUDENTS

LODGING A COMPLAINT - STUDENT - FLOW CHART				
	CATAGORY	COMPLAINT	ACTION	RESOLUTION
STEP 1	Informal Complaint	<p>Complaint received from student. Where possible speak informally to the person and seek a timely resolution.</p>	Meet and discuss	Resolved
STEP 2	Informal Complaint	<p>Complaint received from student. Either you or your parents or carers should speak with your teacher or the Year level Lead Teacher. You may prefer to speak with the College Chaplain or the College Social Worker. The College Chaplain and Social Worker will act confidentially on your behalf. However, if you are about to harm yourself or others or a law is broken, they must act and disclose information to the Principal and other authorities. Record keeping is mandatory.</p>	Meet and Discuss	Resolved - may require an action plan.
STEP 3	Formal Complaint	<p>Complainant lodges a formal online Complaints and Grievances form. Either you or your parents or carers should complete the online form. This form automatically is forwarded to the Director of Student and Staff Welfare, who will act upon the complaint according to the issues and people involved. Record keeping is mandatory.</p>	Meet and Discuss	Resolved – may require an action plan.
STEP 4	Formal Complaint	<p>Follow on from Step 3 for further resolution. The Principal will meet with all parties and make a decision. This decision will be in writing. Record keeping is mandatory.</p>	Meet and discuss	Resolution Relationship restoration and building. May require an action plan.
STEP 5	Further Action	<p>Formal letter to the Chairperson of the Board. If your parents or carers continue to be dissatisfied with the decision or process, they may write a formal letter of complaint to the Chair of the Board and further to that the Director of LEVNT.</p>	Meet and discuss	Final Resolution.

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS / CARERS / THE EASTSIDE LUTHERAN COLLEGE COMMUNITY

What do I do if I need to make a complaint?

If you have a complaint regarding a situation, service, facilities, policy, procedure or behaviour within the College, please follow the flowchart on the following page.

What should I expect throughout this process?

At each step of the Complaints and Grievances process, it is expected that the managing staff member will adhere to the following process:

1. Listen to your Complaint.
2. Acknowledge the issues you have raised.
3. Gather as much information as possible.
4. Communicate their decision, providing reasons to you.
5. Implement their outcome actions.
6. Close the complaint or refer to the next step in the process.

(STEP 1: The informal process) The first step in this process is an attempt at informal resolution. Please follow the flowchart (attached) to ensure that your complaint or grievance is directed to the teacher or staff member directly associated with your complaint. The College does not condone parent's discussion with other parents regarding school-based issues. It is also never appropriate to talk with a Teacher Aide or non-teaching staff regarding any aspect of the College.

(STEP 2) Some complaints may require further support. Where this is the case, your next step is to speak with a senior staff member (e.g. Lead Teacher, College Coordinator). Records of any discussion and resolution will be kept by the staff member managing the complaint.

(STEP 3: The formal process) It is the expectation is that relatively few complaints or grievances will require management at the next level. Should resolution prove impossible at the informal level, a complaint or grievance should now progress to the formal resolution process. Should you wish to file a formal complaint or grievance, you will need to complete the Complaints and Grievances Form, which is available online. Completion of the form will escalate the matter to the Director of Student and Staff Welfare and trigger the commencement of **formal record keeping**.

(STEP 4: formal review by the Principal) This is the usually the final step in the Complaints and Grievance Procedure. Any decisions made by the Principal are usually final. The Principal will collate all of the available information and make a determination. You will be notified of this decision in writing.

(STEP 5: formal letter to the Chairperson of the College Board) If any party continues to be dissatisfied with the decision or process, they may write a formal letter of complaint to the Chair of the Board who may involve the Director of LEVNT. You will be notified of the decision in writing.

FLOWCHART FOR PARENTS / CARERS / THE EASTSIDE LUTHERAN COLLEGE COMMUNITY

LODGING A COMPLAINT - PARENT/ COMMUNITY - FLOW CHART				
	CATAGORY	PROCESS	ACTION	RESOLUTION
STEP 1	Informal Complaint	<p>Speak to the Teacher If your complaint relates to an issue with another student or a classroom happening or process it is VERY IMPORTANT that you speak directly with the teacher involved in the first instance. Please phone the Office and make an appointment to see the teacher so your complaint can be dealt with in a timely manner.</p> <p>The College does not condone parent's discussion with other parents regarding school-based issues. It is also never appropriate to talk with a Teacher Aide or non-teaching staff regarding any aspect of the College.</p> <p>Phone or email the College Office 03 62446885 admin@elc.tas.edu.au If your complaint is of a more general nature i.e., behaviour of students or staff member in public, noise etc or finance, please phone the College Office and your complaint will be directed to the appropriate department.</p>	Meet and discuss or discuss via phone or email	Resolved
STEP 2	Informal Complaint	<p>Talk to the Lead teacher or College Coordinator They will plan a course of action. Meet with the respondent. Record keeping is mandatory.</p>	Meet and Discuss	Resolved
STEP 3	Formal Complaint	<p>Lodge a formal online Complaints and Grievances form This form accessed through the College website automatically is forwarded to the Director of Student and Staff Welfare, who will act upon the complaint according to the issues and people involved. Record keeping is mandatory.</p>	Meet and Discuss	Resolved
STEP 4	Formal Complaint	<p>Follow on from Step 3 for further resolution. The Principal will meet with all parties and make a decision. This decision will be in writing. Record keeping is mandatory.</p>	Meet and discuss	Resolution Relationship restoration and building.
STEP 5	Further action	<p>Formal letter to the Chairperson of the Board. If you continue to be dissatisfied with the decision or process, you may write a formal letter of complaint to the Chair of the Board who may involve the Director of LEVNT.</p>	Meeting and discuss	Final resolution Relationship restoration and building.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What do I do if my complaint or grievances is not resolved by these processes?

If matters still remain unresolved, parties have the right to seek arbitration through the courts, an ombudsman, or other legal channels. These processes may entail a financial cost.

What if my complaint or grievance is against the Principal?

Complaints and grievances against the Principal follow an entirely separate procedure. To make a complaint against the Principal please email the Board Chair at board.chair@elc.tas.edu.au, and your complaint will be directed accordingly.

If you are concerned about the actions of the College, you may approach the chief executive of the Department of Education, Training and Employment. Concerns or complaints about the conduct of a registered provider should be addressed in writing to:

Executive Support Officer to the CEO Authority

Tasmanian Qualifications Authority

Level 6, 39 Murray Street, Hobart

Phone: +61 6165 6000